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SOURCE Newspapers and periodical as indicated.

DEPTH OF DRILLING OF OIL WELLS IN THE USSR

[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

During an interview, reported on 3 January 1953, M. A. Yevseyenko, Deputy Minister of Petroleum Industry USSR, stated that, with the aid of turbodrills, oil wells were being drilled to depths of up to 5 kilometers. The Deputy Minister reported that more than 40 percent of the drilling of wells was being accomplished by the most progressive means, i.e., through the use of turbodrills. He added that powerful pneumatic drilling equipment was supplied by the Sverdlovsk Uralmash Plant, while enterprises of the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry were manufacturing light drilling equipment.(1)

Drilling depths greater than 5 kilometers were planned as early as 1947. An August 1947 source reported that the drilling of the two deepest oil wells in the USSR was to begin in the very near future. These wells were to be located in the vicinity of Zyrya in the region of the 'Azizbekovneft' Trust. According to the plan, these wells were to attain depths of 5,000 to 5,300 meters. Drilling derricks to be used were to be 55 meters high.(2)

During the first quarter 1953 there were several specific references in the Soviet press to drilling of oil wells at very great depths.

One source reported the drilling of deep wells in Ordzhonikidzevskiy Rayon, but did not specify where. One brigade was reported to have achieved a drilling depth of 4,052 meters in a well which was to be 5 kilometers in depth upon completion. Drilling depths of 3,814 and 3,850 meters had been attained in other wells.(3)

Another source reported the drilling of wells to depths of 3,000 meters by drillers of the 'Ukrneft' Association. It stated that five sets of equipment making possible the rapid drilling of wells of this depth had been shipped from Sverdlovsk to Borislav.(4)

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The drilling of very deep oil wells in connection with offshore operations in the Caspian Sea has also been reported. In particular, the Stalinskaya Office of Exploitational Offshore Drilling was reported to be drilling deep wells for the Bukhta Il'ich Oil Field of the Azmorneft' Association. One brigade was stated to have attained depths of 750 and 800 meters in two wells, and was still faced with the task of drilling through more than 3,000 meters of strata.(5)

A lesser depth was planned for an oil well in the Palvantash Oil Field of the Fergana Valley. One brigade in this field was reported to have begun the drilling of a well which was to be $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers deep. By 25 March 1953, the Drilling Section of the Palvantash Oil Field had fulfilled the plan for the first quarter and had already drilled 300 meters on the schedule of the second quarter plan.(6)

Two newspaper articles of March 1953 dealt with the necessity of developing drilling equipment and of perfecting drilling and production methods in order to exploit petroleum-bearing strata lying at very great depths on the Apsheron Peninsula. A. Daniyelyan, director of Azinmash (Azerbaijani Institute of Petroleum Machine Building), reported that exploitation of these rich reserves was an important task for Azerbaijani petroleum workers during the Fifth Five-Year Plan.

Daniyelyan stated that Azinmash had undertaken the task of creating the first models of equipment for the drilling of extremely deep wells, such as would be required on the Apsheron Peninsula. He revealed that some of this equipment had already been manufactured in Baku plants, including one rig with a 53-meter derrick and a lifting capacity of 300 tons. Mud pumps capable of providing a forced system of drilling at great depths had also been constructed. Daniyelyan added that, during 1953, petroleum-machine-building plants are obligated to produce 30 such pumps.

The director of Azinmash admitted certain shortcomings in the work of the institute with regard to its task of designing equipment for the drilling of extremely deep wells. For instance, the work of the institute had not always been done in close enough contact with actual production conditions. However, he also criticized the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry for not being sufficiently helpful in solving the problem of drilling at great depth. This latter criticism bore chiefly on delays which occurred when problems of documentation and authorization were being decided on the ministerial level.(7)

Another article of 24 March 1953 stated that the exploitation of petroleum-bearing deposits lying at extremely great depths on the Apsheron Peninsula was of great significance. In this regard, Azinmash and Azneftemash (Azerbaijani Petroleum Machinery) Trust were criticized for the slow manner in which the creation of a technological basis for the drilling and exploitation of extra-deep wells was being carried out. It was also stated that the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry was not rendering sufficient assistance to the drillers. As an example of a shortcoming, the article reported that problems of exploitation of deep wells using a pump with a depth of suspension of more than 2,000-2,200 meters had not been fully solved.(8)

SOURCES

1. Baku, Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 3 Jan 53
2. Moscow, Neftyanoye Khozyaystvo, No 8, 1947

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3. Moscow, Trud, 16 Feb 53
4. Kiev, Pravda Ukrainy, 28 Feb 53
5. Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 3 Mar 53
6. Ibid., 25 Mar 53
7. Ibid., 1 Mar 53
8. Ibid., 24 Mar 53

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